

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A computer system comprising:
a plurality of first storage devices storing file management information,
a plurality of first computers connected via a storage network to first storage devices,
a plurality of second computers connected via another network to said first computers, [[via a network, and]]
a plurality of second storage devices connected to said second computers, respectively for storing file data managed by said file management information, connected to said second computers, respectively,
a third computer connected to said first and second computers,
a third storage device connected to said third computer for holding data concerning accounting conditions in respect of each of said second computers,
a client computer connected via said another network to said first computers,
and
a file attributes database connected to said third computer for holding an attributes table including file IDs and creation dates for file data, an access right table, and an extended attributes table which is provided for each of said second storage devices and which includes an encryption key,
wherein, when one of said first computers receives an update request for updating file data from a user computer connected via an internet to said another network, said one of said first computers transmits a request to update said file data to one of said second computers,
wherein said one of said second computers executes updating said file data in said second storage devices by referring to said access right table to read data from or write data to said file data and, by referring to said each extended attributes table, and determines

whether to encrypt said file data in response to contents of said encryption key of said extended attributes table,

wherein, when said third computer finds an error that has occurred in updating said file data after collecting results of executed processes, said third computer transmits a request for adding a new record in said third storage device, and

wherein said third computer refers to said new record and said each data concerning accounting conditions stored in said third storage device to calculate charges for updating said file data encrypted.

2. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein when said one of said first computers receives [[a]] said update request to update file data stored in said second storage devices, said one of said first computers confirms the contents of said file management information stored in said first storage devices, ~~and in accordance with said file management information, and transmits to said second computer, a request instructing updating of the file data that is the subject of said request to update file data; and~~

~~based on said instructing request, said second computer updates said file data stored in said second storage device and transmits the result to said first computer.~~

3. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 2, wherein when said first computer receives a request to read file data stored in said second storage devices, said first computer confirms the contents of said file management information stored in said first storage devices and in accordance with said file management information transmits to said second computer a request instructing read of the file data that is the subject of said request to read file data,

based on said instructing request, said one of said second computers reads said file data stored in said second storage devices and transmits said file data thus read to said one of said first computers, and

said one of said first computers transmits said file data thus received to the originating sender of the request to read said file data.

4. (original) A computer system according to claim 3, wherein said file management information includes information on file attributes, information on the storage location of file data and information on access rights to a file.

5. (original) A computer system according to claim 4, wherein said file management information includes a table managing only files possessing certain specified file attributes.

6. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 5, wherein as said one of said first computers receives a request to read said file data or a request to update said file data, said one of said first computers confirms whether or not a file specified by these requests is registered in said table and if registered, and performs processes in accordance with the file attributes of said table.

7. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 6, wherein a file attribute of said table is a file attribute for encryption, and as said one of said first computers receives a request to read said file data, said one of said first computers confirms whether or not the file specified by these requests is registered in said table for the encryption attribute, and if registered, said one of said first computers encrypts the file data received from said one of said second computers based on the information registered in said table for the encryption attribute and transmits said encrypted file data to the originator of said request.

8. (original) A computer system according to claim 7, wherein said file management information includes information necessary to calculate charges for a user using the computer system.

9. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 8, wherein said necessary information includes information on the total volume of file data stored in said second storage devices used by said user, and information on the total volume of data written-in to said second storage devices by said user and the total volume of data read from said second storage devices by said user, and

wherein said necessary information is managed by said one of said second computers managing said second storage devices.

10. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 9, wherein when said one of said second computers receives from said one of said first computers said request to update file data, said one of said second computers transmits to said one of said first computers information on the volume of data stored in said second storage devices at the time of processing said request to update said file data and information on the increased data volume through the data update, and

said one of said first computers uses said information thus received to update the contents of said necessary information stored in said first storage devices.

11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 8, ~~further comprising a plurality of said first computers and said first storage devices,~~

wherein said information on file attributes and said necessary information are each stored in different said first storage devices and each managed by different said plurality of first computers.

13. (currently amended) A computer system according to claim 12, ~~further comprising a plurality of said second storage devices,~~

wherein said file data is replicated and stored respectively in ~~[[of]]~~ among said storage devices existing in plurality.

14. (currently amended) A method of managing data, comprising:
storing file management information in a plurality of first storage devices;
connecting a plurality of first computers via a storage network to the first storage device;

connecting a plurality of second computers via another network to the first computer ~~[[via a network]]~~;

connecting a third computer to said first and second computers;

connecting a third storage device to said third computer for holding data concerning accounting conditions in respect of each of said second computers;
connecting a client computer via said another network to said first computers;
and

connecting a file attributes database to said third computer for holding an attributes table including file IDs and creation dates for file data, an access right table, and an extended attributes table which is provided for each of said second storage devices and which includes an encryption key;

wherein, when one of said first computers receives an update request for updating file data from a user computer connected via an internet to said another network, said one of said first computers transmits a request to update said file data to one of said second computers,

wherein said one of said second computers executes updating said file data in said second storage devices by referring to said access right table to read data from or write data to said file data and, by referring to said each extended attributes table, and determines whether to encrypt said file data in response to contents of said encryption key of said extended attributes table,

wherein, when said third computer finds an error that has occurred in updating said file data after collecting results of executed processes, said third computer transmits a request for adding a new record in said third storage device, and

wherein said third computer refers to said new record and said each data concerning accounting conditions stored in said third storage device to calculate charges for updating said file data encrypted.

~~storing file data in a second storage device;~~
~~connecting the second storage device to the second computer; and~~
~~managing the file data stored in the second storage device using the file management information stored in the first storage device.~~

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 14, further comprising:

when said one of said first computers receives [[a]] said update request to update file data stored in said second storage devices, confirming the contents of said file

management information stored in said first storage devices, ~~and in accordance with said file management information, transmitting to said second computer a request instructing updating of the file data that is the subject of said request to update file data; and~~

~~based on said instructing request received by said second computer, updating said file data stored in said second storage device and transmits the result to said first computer.~~

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15, further comprising:

when said first computer receives a request to read file data stored in said second storage devices, confirming the contents of said file management information stored in said first storage devices and, in accordance with said file management information transmitting to said second computer a request instructing read of the file data that is the subject of said request to read file data,

based on said instructing request received by said one of said second computers, reading said file data stored in said second storage device and transmits said file data thus read to said one of said first computers; and

transmitting said file data thus received to the originating sender of the request to read said file data.

17. (previously presented) A method according to claim 16, wherein said file management information includes information on file attributes, information on the storage location of file data and information on access rights to a file.

18. (previously presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein said file management information includes a table managing only files possessing certain specified file attributes.

19. (currently amended) A method according to claim 18, further comprising

as said one of said first computers receives a request to read said file data or a request to update said file data, confirming whether or not a file specified by these requests is

registered in said table and if registered, and performing processes in accordance with the file attributes of said table.

20. (currently amended) A method according to claim 19, wherein a file attribute of said table is a file attribute for encryption, and further comprising:

as said one of said first computers receives a request to read said file data, confirming whether or not the file specified by these requests is registered in said table for the encryption attribute, and if registered, encrypting the file data received from said one of said second computers based on the information registered in said table for the encryption attribute, and transmitting said encrypted file data to the originator of said request.

21. (new) A method according to claim 19, wherein said file management information includes information necessary to calculate charges for a user using the computer system.